

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Amendments

The Applicant has amended claims 31, 35, 39, 43, 48, 50, 54, and 58; claims 32-34, 44-47, and 51-53 have been canceled. Applicant respectfully submits no new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 31, 35-43, 48-50, and 54-61 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 31, 38, 43, 49, 50, and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Chawla et al (US 6,876,668). The Applicant has amended claims 31, 43 and 50 to better define the intended scope of the claimed invention. The Examiner's consideration of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

The Examiner stated that claims 34, 47, and 53 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections of claims under 35 U.S.C. 112 and the double patenting rejection and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 31 has been amended to incorporate all the limitations of claim 34 and any intervening claims. Claim 43 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 47 and any intervening claims. Claim 50 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 53 and any intervening claims. The rejections of double patenting rejection and 35 U.S.C. 112 were overcome in the response from Applicant dated March 11, 2008.

Claim 38 depends from amended claim 31 and recites further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 31. Claim 49 depends from amended claim 43 and recites further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 43. Claim 57 depends from amended claim 50 and recites further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 50. Therefore, the allowance of claims 31, 38, 43, 49, 50, and 57 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 32-33, and 51-52 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chawla in view of Ganz, et al. (6,049,549). In response, the Applicant has canceled claims 32, 33, 51, and 52.

Claims 35-36, 44-45, and 54-55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chawla in view of Dubuc (6,603,739). The Applicant has amended claims 31 and 50 to better define the intended scope of the claimed invention. The Examiner's consideration of the amended claims is respectfully requested. In addition, claims 44 and 45 have been canceled.

The Examiner stated that claims 34 and 53 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections of claims under 35 U.S.C. 112 and the double patenting rejection and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 31 has been amended to incorporate all the limitations of claim 34 and any intervening claims. Claim 50 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 53 and any intervening claims. The rejections of double patenting rejection and 35 U.S.C. 112 were overcome in the response from Applicant dated March 11, 2008.

Claim 35 and 36 depend from amended claim 31 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 31. Claims 54 and 55 depend from amended claim 50 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 50. Therefore, the allowance of claims 35, 36, and 54, and 55 is respectfully requested.

Claims 37 and 56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chawla in view of Smith et al (7,035,211). The Applicant has amended claims 31 and 50 to better define the intended scope of the claimed invention. The Examiner's consideration of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

The Examiner stated that claims 34 and 53 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections of claims under 35 U.S.C. 112 and the double patenting rejection and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 31 has been amended to incorporate all the limitations of claim 34 and any intervening claims. Claim 50 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of

claim 53 and any intervening claims. The rejections of double patenting rejection and 35 U.S.C. 112 were overcome in the response from Applicant dated March 11, 2008.

Claim 37 depends from amended claim 31 and recites further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 31. Claim 56 depends from amended claim 50 and recites further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 50. Therefore, the allowance of claims 37 and 56 is respectfully requested.

Claim 46 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chawla in view of Dubuc as applied to claim 45 above, and further in view of Pavan et al (6,801,943). In response, the Applicant has canceled claim 46.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant notes with appreciation the conditional allowance of claims 34, 39-42, 47-48, 53, 58-61. The Examiner stated that claims 34, 47, and 53 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections of claims under 35 U.S.C. 112 and the double patenting rejection and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 31 has been amended to incorporate all the limitations of claim 34 and any intervening claims. Claim 43 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 47 and any intervening claims. Claim 50 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 53 and any intervening claims. The rejections of double patenting rejection and 35 U.S.C. 112 were overcome in the response from Applicant dated March 11, 2008. Claims 47 and 53 have been canceled.

Claims 39-42 depend from amended claim 31 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 31. Claim 48 depends from amended claim 43 and recites further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 43. Claims 58-61 depend from amended claim 50 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 50. Therefore, the allowance of claims 39-42, 48, and 58-61 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicant believes all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

The Applicant requests a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sidney L. Weatherford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sidney" being more prominent.

By Sidney L. Weatherford
Registration No. 45,602

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Ericsson Inc.
6300 Legacy Drive, M/S EVR 1-C-11
Plano, Texas 75024

(972) 583-8656
sidney.weatherford@ericsson.com